to assess the impact of liberalized import of agriculture products on Indian agriculture; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The government has not conducted any study in Uttaranchal to assess the impact of liberalized import of agricultural products on Indian agriculture.

Subsequent to removal of quantitative restrictions on imports in 2001, the Government has put in place a suitable mechanism for monitoring the import of sensitive items. Protection to the domestic producers including farmers is provided by resorting to various WTO compatible measures which include appropriate calibration of applied tariff within bound levels and safeguard action under specified circumstances. As a sequel to these measures, import duties on a number of items including edible oils (both crude and refined), tea, coffee, copra and coconut, wheat, rice, maize, pulses, spices, arecanut, apple, cut flowers and vanaspati have been increased in the last 5 years. Further, the Government also implements a number of development programmes to increase the competitiveness of the Indian farmer. These include introduction of improved farming technology, improved availability of inputs including water, credit and fertilizer and price support through the Minimum Support Price (MSP) scheme and Market Intervention Scheme (MIS).

Agriculture Produce Market Committees

1948. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) how many States have passed laws negating monopoly of Agriculture Produce Market Committees;

(b) how many States are likely to pass laws negating Agriculture Produce Market Committees and by when; and

(c) the impact of negating the Agriculture Produce Market Committees on the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) As a measures of reforms in the agricultural marketing sector, the Ministry suggested amendment to the State Agricultural Produce Marketing (Development and Regulation) Act (APMC Act) for deregulation of marketing system in the country to promote direct marketing, contract farming and competitive markets in private and cooperative sectors. Since agriculture marketing is a State subject, it is for the State Governments to amend the APMC Act as suited to them. A Statement indicating the latest progress, State-wise is attached (See below).

(c) The reforms would encourage a regulated marketing regime, where there is fair competition, so that the farmers can gain from the options available and take their produce to the centres that offer the best prices and services. The contract farming arrangements will provide an effective method of linking small farm sector to agro-processing industry and to sources for extension advice, seeds, credit and to assured and profitable markets.

Statement

Progress of Reforms in Agricultural Markets (APMC) as on 28.02.06

Sl. No	Stage of Reforms	Name of States/Union Territories
1.	States/UTs where reforms to APMC Act has been done as suggested	Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Sikkim, Nagaland, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan
2.	StatesAJTs where reforms to APMC partially	Haryana, Karnataka, NCT of Delhi, Chandigarh, Maharashtra, U.P., and Gujarat
3.	States/UTs where there is no hence not requiring reforms	Kerala, Manipur, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu and Lakshadweep
4.	States/UTs where APMC Act already provides for the reforms	Tami! Nadu
5.	States/UTs where administrative action is initiated for the reforms	Orissa, Assam, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Meghalaya, J&K, Uttaranchal, Goa, West Bengal, Pondicherry, Chhattisgarh and Bihar
6.	States/UTs where there is no progress	Jharkhand